

What is claimed is:

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1. A gaming machine comprising:
a memory storing a list of one or more prizes; and
a prize display mechanism displaying one or more prizes available to a user; and
a prize selection mechanism that allows the user to select one or more prizes specific to one or more outcomes of a game played on the gaming machine.

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2. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the prizes are merchandise, vacations, airline miles, shopping sprees and cash.

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3. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the prize selection mechanism allows the user to select one or more prizes specific to a wager amount of the game played on the gaming machine.

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4. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is a mechanical slot machine, a video slot machine, a keno game, a lottery game, or a video poker game.

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5. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein a probability of the outcome of the game played on the gaming machine is specific to a value of the selected prize.

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6. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the prize selection mechanism is a key pad, a button panel, a video touch screen, a mouse, a touch pad, a joystick, a microphone or a magnetic card.

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7. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the prize display mechanism is a printed sign, a video display screen, a bonus wheel, a video touch screen, an LCD, a back-lit glass panel or a prize.

5 8: The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the memory is an EEPROM, a CD-ROM, DVD, a non-volatile memory, or a magnetic storage device.

10 9. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine provides a display format for the one or more prizes displayed on the display mechanism.

15 10. The gaming machine of claim 9, wherein the display format is graphical or textual.

11. The gaming machine of claim 9, wherein the display format indicates a feature of the prize.

12. The gaming machine of claim 11, wherein the prize feature 20 is a prize value

13. The gaming machine of claim 11 wherein the prize feature is a prize theme.

25 14. A prize server comprising;
an interface for providing prize information to one or more gaming machines; and
a memory storing the prize information as groups of prizes for separate display on the one or more gaming machines.

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15. The prize server of claim 14, wherein the prizes are merchandise, vacations, airline miles, shopping sprees and cash.

5 16. The prize server of claim 14, wherein the memory is an EEPROM, a CD-ROM, a non-volatile memory, or a magnetic storage device.

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a DVD,

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10 17. The prize server of claim 14, further comprising a second interface to an output mechanism wherein the second interface is configured to send prize information to the output mechanism.

15 18. The prize server of claim 17, wherein the output mechanism is a printer, a magnetic card reader, optical card reader, smart card reader, or a mechanism for electronically crediting a pre-existing account.

20 19. The prize server of claim 14, wherein the interface is a fiber optic cable, a coaxial cable, or a wireless interface.

25 20. The prize server of claim 14, wherein the display is a video display screen, a touch screen, or a LCD.

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21. A prize distribution network comprising;

(a) a prize server comprising;

An interface for providing prize information to one or more gaming machines; and

A memory storing the prize information as groups of prizes for separate display on the one or more gaming machines; and

(b) a plurality of gaming machines each comprising;

- a memory storing a list of one or more prizes; and
- a prize display mechanism displaying one or more prizes; and
- a prize selection mechanism that allows a user to select one or more prizes specific to one or more outcomes of a game played on the gaming machine.

Sub B6 22. The prize distribution network of claim 21, wherein the
10 machine is a mechanical slot machine, a video slot machine, a keno
game, a lottery game, or a video poker game.

23. The prize distribution network of claim 21, wherein the prizes are merchandise, vacations, airline miles, shopping sprees and cash.

24. In a gaming machine having a prize selection mechanism, a
prize display mechanism for displaying a list of prizes, a method of
selecting a prize specific to an outcome of a game played on a gaming
machine, the method comprising;

displaying multiple prizes available for selection in the prize display mechanism;

25 receiving an input signal from the prize selection mechanism for selecting a prize from the list of prizes, said input signal corresponding to a user's selection of the selected prize;

receiving a game play signal and determining the game play outcome; and

presenting the game play and game play outcome.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the list of prizes includes at least one of merchandise, vacations, airline miles, shopping sprees, or cash.

5 Sub B8] 26. The method of claim 24, further comprising determining a pay table to be used in determining a game play outcome, wherein the pay table is chosen according to the value of the selected prize.

10 27. The method of claim 24, further comprising outputting the selected prizes to a portable memory device.

15 Sub A6] 28. The method of claim 27, wherein the portable memory device is a paper printout, a magnetic card, a personal digital assistant or a smart card.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein the prize selection mechanism is a key pad, a button panel, a touch screen, a mouse, touch pad, joystick, a microphone, a smart card or a magnetic card.

20 Sub B9] 30. The method of claim 24, further comprising receiving a wager amount prior to receiving an input signal from the prize selection mechanism.

25 31. The method of claim 30, further comprising displaying a group of prizes available for selection in the prize display mechanism specific to the wager amount.

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32. The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is a mechanical slot machine, a video slot machine, a keno game, a lottery game, or a video poker game

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5 33. The method of claim 24, further comprising displaying the selected prize on the prize display mechanism;

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10 34. The method of claim 24, wherein the prize display mechanism is a printed sign, a video display screen, a bonus wheel, a video touch screen, back-lit glass panel or an LCD.

15 35. In a prize distribution network comprising a plurality of gaming machines connected to a prize server, a method for distributing information about prizes available on specific gaming machines, the method comprising,

establishing communication with each gaming machine connected to the prize server; and

20 sending prize information from a memory on the prize server to a memory on each gaming machine, said prize information specific to prizes which are available for selection by game players as game awards on games played on the gaming machines.

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25 36. The method of claim 35, wherein the machine is a mechanical slot machine, a video slot machine, a keno game, a lottery game, or a video poker game.

37. The method of claim 35, wherein the prizes are merchandise, vacations, airline miles, shopping sprees and cash.

38. The method of claim 35, further comprising displaying the prize information to a video display screen associated with one or more of the gaming machines.

5 39. The method of claim 38, further comprising identifying one or more prizes selected by a user.

10 40. The method of claim 39, further comprising outputting the selected prize information to a portable storage device, which can be read by one or more of the gaming machines.

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